only for the purpose of discarding them when he is proficient enough to make an individual system. It is also accepted in music, where only the advanced pianist or singer can afford to play tricks with *tempo.* And I am sure it should be accepted in acting.

Nowadays acting is less scientific (except in the matter of voice-production) than it was when I was receiving hints, cautions, and advice from my two dramatist friends, Charles Reade and Tom Taylor ; and the leading principles to which they attached importance have come to be regarded as old-fashioned and superfluous. This attitude is comparatively harmless in the interpretation of those modern plays in which parts are made to fit the actors and personality is everything. But those who have been led to believe that they can make their own rules find their mistake when they come to tackle Shakespeare or any of the standard dramatists in which the actors have to fit themselves to the parts. Then, if ever, technique is avenged!

All my life the thing which has struck me as wanting on the stage is *variety.* ' Some people are " tone-deaf/' and they find it physically impossible to observe the law of contrasts. But even a physical deficiency can be overcome by that faculty for taking infinite pains which may not be genius but is certainly a good substitute for it.

When it comes to pointing out an example, Henry Irving is the monument, the great mark set up to show the genius of *will.* For years he worked

to over-
come the dragging leg, which seemed to attract more
attention from some small-minded critics (sharp of eye,
yet how dull of vision!) than all the mental splendour
of his impersonations. He toiled, and he overcame
this defect, just as he overcame his disregard of the
vowels and the self-consciousness which in the early